

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1104

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

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SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE - ANGOLAN TALKS AND MPLA "LEADERSHIP CRISIS"

REF: LUSAKA 2621

1. UNITA LEADER JONAS SAVIMBI TOLD NEWSMEN HERE DEC. 29 THAT CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS WILL BE HELD IN LISBON ON JAN. 10. ACCORDING TIMES OF ZAMBIA, SAVIMBI URGED PORTUGAL NOT TO DELAY BUT "TO ABIDE BY ITS PROMISE" TO CONVENE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE BY THAT DATE. PREVIOUS PORTUGUESE CLAIMS THAT ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE DELAYED BECAUSE OF DISUNITY AMONG THREE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WERE NO LONGER VALID AS THREE HAD NOW THRASHED OUT THEIR DIFFERENCES, SAVIMBI REPORTEDLY SAID.

2. YET ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL VERSION OF SAVIMBI INTERVIEW SUGGESTED
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THAT REAL UNITY AMONG MPLA, FNLA, AND UNITA IS STILL AN

UNRESOLVED POLITICAL PROBLEM. MAIL SPEAKS OF MPLA'S "LEADERSHIP CRISIS" AND STATES THAT PORTUGUESE JUNTA HAS DECIDED TO INTERVENE TO ATTEMPT AVERT CIVIL WAR AFTER INDEPENDENCE. PORTUGUESE WILL ATTEMPT FIND WAYS TO FIT BOTH NETO AND CHIPENDA INTO INTERIM GOVERNMENT. SAVIMBI SAID TO BE OPTIMISTIC AFTER HIS TALKS WITH CHIPENDA AND FNLA'S HOLDEN ROBERTO IN KINSHASA LAST WEEK THAT MPLA CRISIS WILL BE SOLVED IN TIME FOR ANGOLANS TO PRESENT UNIFIED FRONT AT JANUARY 10 CONFERENCE. PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS REPORTEDLY WILL HOLD TALKS WITH ALL THREE MOVEMENTS OVER NEXT TWO WEEKS TO WORK OUT FINAL ARRANGEMENTS.

3. MAIL REPORTS SAVIMBI AND NETO WERE CLOSETED ALL DAY SUNDAY AT LUSAKA INTERCONTINENTAL WHILE JACOB KAMALATA, FORMER MPLA REPRESENTATIVE IN LUSAKA, AND ANOTHER MEMBER OF CHIPENDA FACTION COOLED THEIR HEELS IN HOTEL LOBBY WAITING TO SEE SAVIMBI. MEETING WITH SAVIMBI POSTPONED UNTIL DEC. 30 AND KAMALATA HAS ANNOUNCED HE WILL MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENT TODAY. (SO FAR, NONE HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING.) HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT ZAIRE HAS BECOME FIRST AFRICAN COUNTRY TO GRANT CHIPENDA FACTION "DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION".

4. ACCORDING TO MAIL, NO DATE FOR NETO-ROBERTO MEETING TO SIGN COOPERATION ACCORD BETWEEN MPLA AND FNLA HAS YET BEEN SET.

5. COMMENT: IF PORTUGUESE HAVE INDEED COME UP WITH FORMULA THAT WOULD PERMIT BOTH NETO AND CHIPENDA TO BE ACCOMMODATED IN INTERIM ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT, THEN ANGOLANS MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO WORK AROUND THEIR DIFFERENCES SUFFICIENTLY THAT MEANINGFUL CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS COULD BE POSSIBLE SOMETIME NEXT MONTH. APPEARANCE IN LUSAKA OF DELEGATION FROM CHIPENDA COULD THEREFORE BE SIGN THAT CHIPENDA, AS HE RECENTLY TOLD BELGIAN JOURNALIST (BRUSSELS 10183), IS READY "IN HIGHER INTEREST OF ANGOLA" TO MEET WITH NETO IN ORDER TO BREAK MPLA LEADERSHIP IMPASSE. SAVIMBI, WHO HAS INCREASINGLY EMERGED AS MESSENGER IF NOT MEDIATOR BETWEEN OPPOSING MPLA FACTIONS, MAY BE ATTEMPTING PERSUADE NETO TO AGREE MEET CHIPENDA OR AT LEAST LISTEN TO WHATEVER HE MAY HAVE TO OFFER. QUESTION NOW IS TO WHAT DEGREE NETO FEELS UNDER COMPULSION TO TREAT WITH CHIPENDA. WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT KAUNDA OUT OF TOWN AND LIKELY IN ANY EVENT TO BE PREOCCUPIED THIS WEEK WITH VISIT OF BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY AND RHODESIAN QUESTION, HEAVY ZAMBIAN CONCENTRATION OR PRESSURE ON NETO TO COMPROMISE SEEMS UNLIKELY. WITH JUST 11 DAYS TO GO, PROSPECT THAT ANGOLANS CAN RESOLVE THEIR DIFFERENCES IN TIME TO BE ABLE TO ENTER CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS WITH PORTUGUESE BY JAN 10 APPEARS SLIM.
WILKOWSKI

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